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27th April, 1966.

Harold Weisberg Esq.,
Hyattstown,
Md. 20734,
U.S.A.

Dear Mr Weisberg,

I was unable to telephone you as requested simply because I have not been in the office for two and a half days - I have only just arrived and it is nearly six o'clock after, for example, a full day's sales meeting at the Cafe Royal where I have been deliberating to all the salesmen on our Autumn and Winter List.

Even telephoning you would have been to little purpose. I will tell you this much, that we would have done your book - happily and willingly - and we were vastly disappointed when we had news of the Bodley Head and Penguin editions of the other book. Just before hearing this news we have, in fact decided that, subject to your agreement, we would publish your book and we could have swung it into action very fast indeed with a quality production - I emphasize that we have very high quality in our production but we are also fortunate because we have seven printing houses to call on for priority work.

Alas, there is no question about it but that we would have failed miserably because without any shadow of doubt the market will be taken by the Bodley Head and Penguin books. For example, Penguin are doing the other book as a Penguin 'Special'

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Authors and literary agents are kindly requested to note that Leslie Frewin Publishers Limited accept MSS. for negotiation only on the understanding that they shall not be held responsible for their accidental loss from fire or any other cause while in their offices or in transit.

Continuation sheet

Harold Weisberg Esq. 27th April, 1966.

and this means a print order of something like 50 to 100,000 copies and by the time we had achieved publication with your book as a major Autumn work, the market would assuredly have disappeared.

I am as sorry as you are but while I have read every detail of your most interesting letter, we do know our market very well indeed and we would have been asking - nay, praying - for a heavy financial loss on such a detailed and large work as yours.

I know it must be very frustrating to you to have put in so much work and to find so many terrifying obstacles in the way of publication but, as I say, if it is of any comfort to you to know this, we had definitely decided on publication. Four hours later, our 'intelligence' unit uncovered the facts of the publication of the other book.

Then another incredible coincidence - out of the blue an English scholar sent me a letter which arrived the day after submitting the idea of his prepared manuscript based on the 26 or so dossiers of the Report - an analytical appraisal with, we learned, largely the same findings as your own - but of course we cannot judge the manuscript because we had to decline it on the basis of the letter. How strange is life!

We are very sorry indeed and but for the facts given above we would unquestionably have gone ahead with publication.

I hope you will give us the privilege of considering your next work, and all power to you in your obviously sincere and earnest endeavours.

Yours sincerely

Leslie Frewin

Leslie Frewin

c.c. Gordon Harbord Esq.,